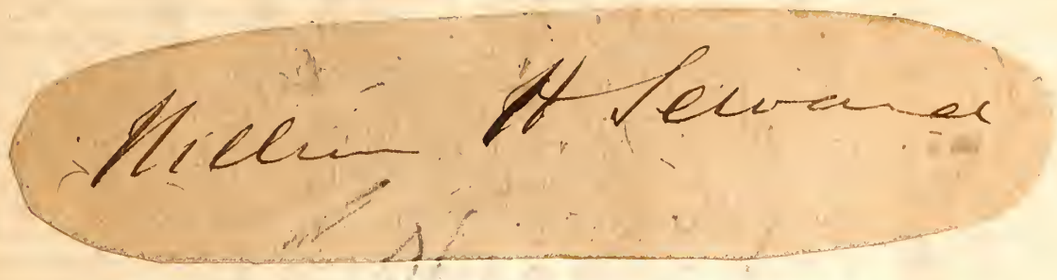
EVENING JOURNAL TRACTS, No. 12

The National Divergence and Return.



WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

AT

DETROIT, SEPTEMBER 4, 1860.

FELLOW CITIZENS:

We claim that our political system is a judicious one, and that we are an intelligent and virtuous people. The government ought therefore not only to secure respect and good will abroad, but also to produce good order, contentment and harmony at home. It fails to attain these ends. The Canadians certainly neither envy nor love us. All the Independent American powers from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, while they strive to construct governments for themselves after our models, fear, and many of them hate us. European nations do indeed revere our constitutions and admire our progress, but they generally agree in pronouncing us inconsistent with our organic principle, and capricious. The President inveighs against corruption among the people. The immediate representatives of the people in Congress, charge the President with immoral practices, and the President protests against their action as subversive of the Executive prerogative. The House of Representatives organizes itself convulsively amid confessed dangers of popular commotion. The Senate listens unsurprised, and almost without excitement, to menaces of violence, secession and disunion. Frauds and violence in the territories are palliated and rewarded. Exposure and resistance to them are condemned and punished, while the just, enlightened and reasonable will of the people there, though constitutionally expressed, is circumvented, disobeyed and disregarded. States watch anxiously for unlawful intrusion and invasion by citizens of other states, while the Federal Courts fail to suppress piracies on the high seas, and even on our own coasts. The government of the Union, courts and submits to state espionage of the Federal mails, while the states scarcely attempt to protect the personal rights of citizens of other states, peacefully pursuing harmless occupations within their fraternal jurisdictions.

Are the people satisfied and content? Let their several parties and masses answer. Certainly you, the Republi ans of Michigan, as well as the Republicans throughout the whole country, are not satisfied. But you are interested in a change of administration, and therefore perhaps prejudiced. Ask then, the Constitutional Union men, few and inefficient indeed here, but numerous and energetic elsewhere. They are not satisfied. If they were they would not be engaged as they are now, in a hopeless attempt to organize a new party without any principles at all, after their recent failures to combine such a party on obnoxious principles. But they also are interested and possibly prejudiced like the Republicans. Appeal then to the Democratic party, which enjoys and wields the patronage and power of the Federal Government. Even the Democrats are no less dissatisfied. They certainly are dissatisfied with the Republicans, with the National Union men, with their own administration, with each other, and as I think even individually, with themselves. The North is not satisfied. Its masses want a suppression of the African slave trade, and an effectual exclusion of slavery from the territories, so that all the new and future states, may surely be free states. The South is not satisfied. Its masses by whatever means, and at whatever cost, desire the establishment and protection of slavery in the terri-

tories, so that none of the new states may fail to become slave states. The East is discontented with the neglect of its fishery, manufacture and navigation, and the West is impatient under the operation of a national policy, hostile to its agricultural, mining and social developments. What government in the world but ours, has persistently refused to improve rivers, construct harbors and establish light houses, for the protection of its commerce? New and anomalous combinations of citizens appear, in the North justifying armed instigators of civil and servile war, in the South devising means for the disruption and dismemberment of the Union. It is manifest, that we are suffering in the respect and confidence of foreign states, and that disorder and confusion are more flagrant among ourselves now than ever before.

I do not intend to be understood that these evils are thus far productive of material suffering or intolerable embarrassment, much less that the country is, as so many extravagant persons say, on the high road to civil war or dissolution. On the contrary, this fair land we live in is so blessed with all the elements of human comfort and happiness, and its citizens are at once so loyal and wise and so well surrounded by yet unbroken guaranties of civil and religious liberty, that our experience of misrule at the very worst never becomes so painful as to raise the question how much more of public misery we can endure; but it leaves us at liberty to stop now as always heretofore with the inquiry how much more of freedom, prosperity and honor, we can secure by the practice of greater wisdom and higher virtue? Discontentment is the wholesome fruit of a discovery of maladministration, and conviction of public error is here at least always a sure harbinger of political reform.

Martin Van Buren, they say, is writing a review of his own life, and our time, for posthumous uses. If it is not disrespectful, I should like to know now the conclusions he draws from the national events he has seen, and of which he has been an important part; for he is a shrewd observer, with advantages of large and long experience. To me it seems that the last forty years have constituted a period of signal and lamentable failure in the efforts of statesmen to adjust and establish a federal policy for the regulation of the subject of slavery in its relations to the Union. In this view I regard it as belonging to the office of a statesman not merely to favor an immediate and temporary increase of national wealth, and an enlargement of national territory, but also to fortify, so far as the prescribed constitutional limits of his action may allow, the influences of knowlege and humanity; to abate popular prejudices and passions, by modifying or removing their causes; to ascertain and disclose the operation of general laws and to study and reveal the social tendencies of the age, and by combining the past with the present, while giving free play all the time to the reciprocating action of the many co-existing moral forces, to develop that harmonious system which actually prevails in the apparent chaos of human affairs; and so to gain something in the way of assurance as to the complexion of that futurity towards which, since our country is destined to endure, and insomuch as we desire that it may be immortal, our thoughts are so vehemently driven even by the selfish as well as by the generous principles of our nature.

I have understood that John Quincy Adams, the purest and wisest statesman I ever knew, died despairing of a peaceful solution of the problem of slavery, on which he was so intently engaged throughout his public service. If we may judge from the absolute failures of Mr. Van Buren, Mr. Polk, Mr. Pierce and Mr. Buchanan in the respect I have mentioned, and if we take into consideration also the systems which Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Benton, Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster severally recommended, and which have subsequently failed to be adopted, we may perhaps conclude that the difficulties of establishing a satisfactory and soothing policy have overtasked even our wisest and most eminent statesmen. They certainly have been neither incapable nor selfish men. No age or country has been illustrated by public characters of greater genius, wisdom and virtue.

It is easy to see, fellow citizens, that the failure has resulted not from the faults of our statesmen, but from the peculiar constitutions and characters of political parties, on which they relied for power. Solid, enduring and constant parties, inspired by love of country, reverence for virtue and devotion to human liberty, bold in their conceptions of measures, moderate in success, and resolute throughout reverses, are essential to effective and beneficent administration in every free state. Unanimity, even in a wise, just and necessary policy, can never be expected in any country all at once, and without thorough debate and earnest conflicts of opinion. All public movements are therefore undertaken and prosecuted through the agencies, not of individuals, but of parties regulated, excited and moderated, as occasion may require, by their representatives. He who proposes means so impracticable that he can win no party to their support, may be a philanthropist, but he cannot be a statesman; and even when the leader in administration is thus sustained, he is, although never so earnest or wise, everywhere and at all times inefficient and imbecile, just in the degree that the party on which he depends, is inconstant, vacillating, timid or capricious. What has become of the several political parties, which have flourished within your time and mine? That dashing, unterrified, defiant party, whose irresistible legions carried the honest and intrepid hero of New Orleans on their shields, through so many civil encounters—that generous though not unprejudiced Whig party, which apprehensive of perpetual danger from too radical policies of administration, so often with unabated chivalry and enthusiasm, magically recombined its bruised and scattered columns, even when a capricious fortune had turned its rare and hard won triumphs into defeats more disastrous than the field fights which it had lost—the recent American party, that sprang at one bound from ten thousand dark chambers and which seemed only yesterday at the very point of carrying the government by a *coup de main*. All these parties, that for brief periods seemed so strong and so unchanging, have perished, leaving no deep impression on the history of the country they aimed to direct and rule forever. The Democratic party too that has clothed itself so complacently with the pleasant traditions of all preceding parties, and combined so felicitously

the most popular of our national sympathies with the most inveterate and repulsive of our conservative interests, that has won the South so dexterously, by stimulating its maddest ambition, and yet has held the North so tenaciously and so long, by awakening its wildest and most demoralizing fears. What is its condition? It is distinguished in fortune from its extinguished rivals only, by the circumstance that both portions of its crew, divided as the hulk breaks into two not unequal parts, retain sufficient energy in their despair, to seize on the drifting wrecks of other parties, and by a cunning though hopeless carpentery, to frame wretched and rickety rafts on which to sustain themselves for one dark night more on the tempestuous sea of national politics. All these parties, it is now manifest, were organized not specially to establish justice and maintain freedom and equality among an honest, jealous and liberty loving people, but to achieve some material public advantage of temporary importance, or to secure the advancement of some chief to whose discretion, as if the government were an elective despotism instead of a Republic, the distribution of its patronage and the direction of its affairs should be implicitly confided. They did indeed out of respect or fear of generous reforms, often affect to express elevated principles and generous sentiments in their carefully elaborated creeds, but these creeds nevertheless, even when not ambiguously expressed, were from time to time revised and qualified and modified, so that at last the interpreters who alone had them by heart, and were able to repeat them, were found perverting the constitution in its most unequivocal parts, and most palpable meaning, disparaging and rejecting the Declaration of Independence, and stultifying the founders of the Republic. The parties thus constituted, dependent not on any national or even on any natural sentiment, but on mere discipline for their cohesion, and coming at last through constant demoralization, to assume that capital and not labor, property and not liberty is the great interest of every people, and that religion conversant only with the relations of men to an unseen and future world, must be abjured in their conduct towards each other on earth, have finally discarded justice and humanity from their systems, broken up nearly all the existing combinations for spiritual ends, and attempted to conduct affairs of government on principles equally in violation of the constitution and of the eternal laws of God's Providence for the regulation of the Universe.

These views of the characters of our modern parties are by no means newly conceived on my part. In that high and intensely exciting debate in Congress in the year 1850, which, overruling the administration of General Taylor, brought the two then dominating parties into a compromise at the time solemnly pronounced final, irrevocable and eternal, but which was nevertheless scattered to the winds of Heaven only four years afterward, the great statesman of Kentucky denounced party spirit as he assumed it to be raging throughout the country, as pregnant with the imminent and intolerable disasters of civil war and national dissolution. I ventured then to reply that, in my humble judgment, it was not a conflict of parties that we then were seeing and hearing, but it was, on the contrary, the agony of distracted parties, a convulsion resulting from the too narrow foundations of both of the great parties and of all the parties of the day, foundations that had been laid in compromises of natural justice and human rights—that a new and great question—a moral question transcending the too narrow creeds of existing parties had arisen—that the public conscience was expanding with it, and the green withes of party combinations were giving way and breaking under the pressure—that it was not the union that was decaying and dying as was supposed, of the fever of party spirit, but that the two great parties were smitten with paralysis, fatal indeed to them unless they should consent to be immediately renewed and re-organized, borrowing needful elements of health and vigor from a cordial embrace with the humane spirit of the age.

But, fellow-citizens, to exempt our statesmen by casting blame on our political parties, does not reach, but only approximates the real source of responsibility. All of these parties have been composed of citizens, not a few but many citizens, in the aggregate, all the citizens of the Republic. They were not ignorant, willful or dishonest citizens, but sincere, faithful and useful members of the State. The parties of our country, what are they at any time, but ourselves, the people of our country? Thus the faults of past administration and of course the responsibility for existing evils, are brought directly home to yourselves and myself—to the whole people. This is no hard saying. The wisest, justest and most virtuous of men occasionally errs and has need daily to implore the Divine Goodness that he be not led further into temptation; and just so the wisest, justest and most virtuous of nations often unconsciously lose and depart from their ancient approved and safer ways. Is there any society, even of Christians, that has never had occasion to reform its practice, retrace its too careless steps and discard heresies that have corrupted its accepted faith? What was the English revolution of 1648, but a return from the dark and dangerous road of absolutism? What the French revolution, but a mighty convulsion, that while it carried a brave, enlightened, and liberty-loving nation backward on their progress of three hundred years, owed all its horrors to the delay which had so long postponed the needed reaction!

A national departure always happens, when a great emergency occurs unobserved and unfelt, bringing the necessity for the attainment of some new and important object, which can only be secured through the inspiration of some new but great and generous national sentiment.

Let us see if we can ascertain in the present case, when our departure from the right and safe way occurred. Certainly it was not in the Revolutionary age. The nation then experienced and felt a stern necessity, perceived and resolutely aimed at a transcendently sublime object, and accepted cheerfully the awakening influences of an intensely moving and generous principle. The necessity was deliverance from British oppression; the object, independence; the principle, the inalienable rights of man. The revolution was a success, because the country had in Adams and Jefferson and Washington and their associates, the leaders, and in the Whigs, the party needful for this crisis, and these were sustained by the people.

Our departure was not at the juncture of the establishment of the constitution. The country

then had and owned a new and overpowering necessity, perceived and demanded a new object and adopted a new and most animating principle. The necessity, the escape from anarchy; the object, Federal Union; the principle, fraternity of the American people. The Constitution with the Ordinance of 1787, practically a part of it, was not a failure, because HAMILTON, JAY and MADISON were competent, and the Federal party was constant, and the people gave it a confiding and generous support.

It was not in 1800, that the national deviation took place. Then were disclosed a new public necessity, new object, and new principle. A separation and removal of aristocratic checks and interests from the mechanism of our republican institutions. The needed reform did not fail, because JEFFERSON and GEORGE CLINTON, with their associates braved all resistance, the Republican party defended, and the people sustained them.

Again the departure did not occur in 1812. Then was discovered a farther necessity, bringing into view a farther object and introducing yet another new and noble principle of action. The necessity, a vindication of national rights; the object, freedom of intercourse with mankind; the principle, the defence of our homes and our honor. The war of 1812 was a success, because CLAY, CALHOUN and TOMPKINS did not shrink from the trial; the Republican party approved and the people sustained them.

In 1820, however, the nation had unconsciously reached and entered a new stage in its successful career, namely, that of expansion. By purchases from France and Spain it had extended its borders from the St. Mary's southward around the peninsula of Florida, and from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, an expansion to be afterwards indefinitely continued. We all know the advantages of expansion. They are augmented wealth and population. But we all know equally well, if we will only reflect, that no new advantage is ever gained in national more than in individual life without exposure to some new danger. What then is the danger which attends expansion? It is nothing less and can be nothing less than an increase of the strain upon the bonds of the Union. The time had come to organize government finally in the newly acquired territory of Louisiana, on principles that should be applied thereafter in all cases of further expansion. This necessity brought into glaring light a new object, namely, since the only existing cause of mutual alienation among the states was slavery, which was already carefully circumscribed by the ordinance of 1787, that anomalous institution must now be further circumscribed by extending the ordinance to cover the new states to be established in the Louisianian purchase. To this end a new and humane impulse naturally moved the country, namely, the freedom of human labor.

But although statesmen qualified for the crisis appeared, no party stood forth to support them with constancy, and the country, after a temporary glow of free soil excitement, subsided into cold indifference—and so a compromise was made which divided the newly acquired domain between free labor and capital in slaves, between freedom and slavery, a memorable compromise, which, after a trial of only thirty-four years, proved to be effective only in its concessions to slavery, while its greater guaranties of freedom were found unavailing and worthless. History says that the compromise of 1820 was necessary to save the Union from disruption. I do not dispute history, nor debate the settled moral questions of the past. I only lament that it was necessary, if indeed it was so. History tells us that the course then adopted was wise. I do not controvert it. I only mourn the occurrence of even one case, most certainly the only one that ever did happen, in which the way of wisdom has failed to be also the way of pleasantness, and the path of peace. It was in 1820, therefore, that the national deviation began. We have continued ever since the divergent course then so inconsiderately entered, until at last we have reached a point, where, amid confusion, bewilderment and mutual recriminations, it seems alike impossible to go forward or to return. We have added territory after territory, and region after region with the customary boldness of feebly resisted conquerors, not merely neglecting to keep slavery out of our new possessions, but actually removing all the barriers against it which we found standing at the times of conquest. In doing this we have defied the moral opinions of mankind, overturned the laws and systems of our fathers, and dishonored their memories by declaring that the unequaled and glorious constitution which they gave us, carries with it, as it attends our eagles, not freedom and personal rights to the oppressed, but slavery and a hateful and baleful commerce in slaves, wherever we win a conquest by sea or land over the whole habitable globe.

While we must now, in deference to history, excuse the first divergence, it is manifest that our subsequent persistence in the same course has been entirely unnecessary and unjustifiable. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Canada, what remains of Mexico, all the West Indies and Central America, are doubtless very desirable, but we have patiently waited for them, and are now likely to wait until they can be acquired without receiving slavery with them, or extending it over them. Nay, all the resistance we have ever met in adding Spanish American territories to our Republic, has resulted from our wilful and perverse purpose of subverting freedom there, to blight the fairest portion of the earth, when we found it free, by extending over it our only national agency of desolation. We may doubtless persist still further. We may add conquest to conquest, for resistance to our ambition daily grows more and more impossible, until we sur pass in extent and apparent strength the greatest empires of ancient or modern times, all the while enlarging the area of African bondage; but after our already ample experience, I think no one will be bold enough to deny that we equally increase the evils of discontent and the dangers of domestic faction.

Fellow-citizens, while I lament the national divergence I have thus described, I do not confess it to be altogether inexcusable. Much less do I blame any one or more of our politicians or parties, while exempting others. All are, in different degrees perhaps, responsible alike, and all have abundant, if not altogether adequate excuses. Deviation once begun, without realizing the immediate presence of danger, it was easier to continue on than to return. The country has all the time been growing richer and more prosperous and populous. It was not unnatural that we should disregard warnings of what we were

assured by high though interested authorities, always were distant, improbable and even visionary dangers. It cannot be denied that the African races among us are abject, although their condition, and even their presence here are due not to their will or fault, but to our own, and that they have a direct interest in the question of slavery. How natural has it been to assume that the motive of those who have protested against the extension of slavery, was an unnatural sympathy with the negro instead of what it always has really been, concern for the welfare of the white man. There are few, indeed, who ever realize that the whole human race suffers somewhat in the afflctions and calamities which befall the humblest and most despised of its members.

The argument, though demanding the most dispassionate calmness and kindness, has too often been conducted with anger and broken out into violence.

Moreover, alarms of disunion were sounded, and strange political inventions like the floating fire ships sent down the St. Lawrence, by the besieged in Quebec, to terrify the army of Wolfe on the Island of St. Louis, appeared suddenly before us whenever we proposed to consider in good earnest, the subject of Federal slavery.

We love and we ought to love the fellowship of our slaveholding brethren. How natural, therefore, has it been to make the concessions so necessary to silence their complaints, rather than by seeming impracticability in what was thought a matter of indifference, to lose such genial companionship. Again, at least, present peace and safety together, with some partial guaranties and concessions of freedom, were from time to time obtained by compromises. Who had the right, or who the presumption to say with the certainty of being held responsible for casting imputations of bad faith upon our southern brethren, that these compromises would, when their interests should demand it, be disavowed and broken ?

Other nations, we have assumed, are jealous of our growing greatness. They have censured us, perhaps with unjust asperity, for our apostacy in favor of slavery. How natural and even patriotic has it been on our part to manifest by persistence, our contempt and defiance of such interested and hostile animadversions. Besides, though slavery is indeed now practically a local and peculiar institution of the South, it was not long ago the habit and practice of the whole American people. It is only twenty-five years since our British brethren abolished slavery in their colonies, and only half a century since we or any European nation interdicted the African slave trade. Scarcely three generations have passed away, since the subject of the wrongfulness of slavery first engaged the consideration of mankind.

You and I indeed understand now very well, how it is, that slavery in the territories of the United States, is left open by the constitution to our utmost peaceful opposition, while within the slave states, it is entrenched behind local constitutions beyond the reach of external legislation. But the subject is a complex one, and the great masses of the people to whom it has only been recently presented, and doubtlessly often presented, under unfavorable circumstances, might well desire time for its careful and deliberate examination.

It seems a bold suggestion to say, that a great nation ought to reconsider a practice of forty years' duration; but forty years of a nation's life, are equivalent to only one year in the life of an individual. The thought is at least consistent with political philosophy, for it is not more true that personal persistence in error leads inevitably to ruin, than it is that every nation exists by obedience to the same moral laws which direct individual life, that they are written in its original constitution, and it must continually reform itself according to the spirit of those laws, or perish.

My humble advice, then, fellow citizens, is, that we return and re-establish the original policy of the nation, and henceforth hold, as we did in the beginning, that slavery is and must be only a purely local, temporary and exceptional institution, confined within the slave states where it already exists, while Freedom is the general, normal, enduring and permanent condition of society within the jurisdiction, and under the authority of the Constitution of the United States.

I counsel thus for a simple reason incapable of illumination. Slavery, however it may be at any time or in any place excused, is at all times and everywhere unjust and inhuman in its very nature; while freedom, however it may be at any time or in any place neglected, denied, or abused, is in its nature right, just and beneficent. It can never under any cirumstances be wise to persevere voluntarily, in extending or fortifying an institution that is intrinsically wrong or cruel It can never be unwise wherever it is possible, to defend and fortify an existing institution that is founded on the rights of Human Nature. Insomuch as opinions are so materially, and yet so unconsciously affected and modified by time, place and circumstances, we may hold these great truths firmly, without impeaching the convictions or the motives of those who deny them in argument or in practice.

I counsel thus for another reason quite as simple as the first. Knowledge, emulation and independence among the members of a social state are the chief elements of national wealth, strength and power. Ignorance, indolence and bondago of individuals are always sources of national imbecility and decline. All nations in their turns have practised slavery. Most of them have abolished it. The world over, the wealthiest and most powerful nations have been those which tolerated it least, and which earliest and most completely abolished it. Virginia and Texas are thrown into a panic even now by the appearance or even the suspicion of a handful of men within their borders, instigating civil war. Massachusetts and Vermont defied British invasion. backed by treason, eighty years ago.

Thirdly, there is no necessity now to fortify or extend slavery within the United States or on the American continent. All the supposed necessities of that sort ever before known, have passed away forever. Let us briefly review them. With the discovery and conquest of America confessedly came a responsibility to reclaim it from nature and to introduce civilization. Unfortunately Spain and Portugal, the discoverers and conquerors, were of all the European States in the sixteenth century, the worst qualified and least able to colonize. They were neither populous, nor industrious, nor free; but were na

tions of princes and subjects; of soldiers, navigators, nobles, priests, poets and scholars, without merchants, mechanics, farmers, or laborers. The art of navigation was imperfect; its practice dangerous, and the new world that the Pope had divided between his two most loyal crown wearing children was in its natural state pestilential. European emigration was therefore impracticable. In the emergency the conquerors, with ruffian violence, swept off at once the gold and silver ornaments which they found in the temples and on the persons of the natives, ignorant of their European values, and subjugated and enslaved the natives themselves. But these simple children of the forest, like the wild flowers when the hurricane sweeps over the prairies, perished under cruelties so contrary to nature.

The African trade, in prisoners of war spared from slaughter, afforded an alternative. The chiefs sold ten men, women or children, for a single horse. The conquerors of America brought this unnatural merchandise to our coasts. When the English colonists of North America, happily in only a very limited degree, borrowed from their predecessors this bad practice of slavery, they borrowed also its wretched apology, a want of an adequate supply of free labor. It was then thought an exercise of Christian benevolence to rescue the African heathen from eternal suffering in a future state, and through the painful path of earthly bondage to open to him the gates of the celestial paradise. But all this is now changed. We are at last no feeble or sickly colonies, but a great, populous, homogeneous nation, unsurpassed and unequaled in all the elements of colonization and civilization. Free labor here continually increases and abounds, and is fast verging towards European standards of value. There is not one acre too much in our broad domain for the supply of even three generations of our free population, with their certain increase. Immigration from Europe is crowding our own sons into the western region, and this movement is daily augmented by the application of new machines for diminishing mechanical and even agricultural labor. At this very moment, Congress, after a long and obstinate reluctance, finds itself obliged to yield a homestead law to relieve the pressure of labor in the Atlantic States. Certainly, therefore, we have no need and no room for African slaves in the Federal territories. Do you say that we want more sugar and more cotton, and therefore must have more slaves and more slave labor. I answer, first, that no class or race of men have a right to demand sugar, cotton, or any other comfort of human life to be wrung for them, through the action of the Federal Government, from the unrewarded and compulsory labor of any other class or race of men.

I answer, secondly, that we have sugar and cotton enough already for domestic consumption and a surplus of the latter for exportation without any increase of slave territory. Do you say that Europe wants more sugar and cotton than we can now supply? I reply, let then Europe send her free laborers hither, or into Italy, or into the West Indies, or into the East; or if it suit them better, let them engage the natives of cotton growing regions in the old world, to produce cotton and sugar voluntarily and for adequate compensation. Such a course, instead of fortifying and enlarging the sway of slavery here, will leave us free to favor its gradual removal. It will renew or introduce civilization on the shores of the Mediterranean and throughout the coasts of the Indian Ocean. Christianity, more fully developed and better understood now than heretofore, turns with disgust and horror from the employment of force and piracy as a necessary agency of the Gospel.

Fourthly. All the subtle evasions and plausible political theories which have heretofore been brought into the argument for an extension of slavery, have at last been found fallacious and frivolous.

It is unavailing now to say that this government was made by and for white men only, since even slaves owed allegiance to Great Britain before the Revolution equally with white men, and were equally absolved from it by the Revolution, and are not only held to allegiance now under our laws, but are also subjected to taxation and actual representation in every department of the Federal Government. No government can excuse itself from the duty of protecting the extreme rights of every human being, whether foreign or native born, bond or free, whom it compulsorily holds within its jurisdiction. The great fact is now fully realized that the African race here is a foreign and feeble element like the Indians, incapable of assimilation, but not the less, therefore, entitled to such care and protection as the weak everywhere may require from the strong; that it is a pitiful exotic unwisely and unnecessarily transplanted into our fields, and which it is unprofitable to cultivate at the cost of the desolation of the native vinyard. Nor will the argument that the party of slavery is national and that of freedom sectional, any longer avail when it is fully understood, that so far as it is founded in truth, it is only a result of that perversion of the constitution which has attempted to circumscribe freedom, and to make slavery universal throughout the Republic. Equally do the reproaches, invectives and satires of the advocates of slavery extension fail, since it is seen and felt that truth, reason and humanity, can work right on without fanaticism and bear contumely without retaliation. I counsel his course farther, because the combinations of slavery are broken up, and can never be renewed with success. Any new combination must be based on the principle of the Southern Democratic faction, that slavery is inherently just and beneficent, and ought to bo protected, which can no longer be tolerated in the North; or else on the principle of the Northern Democratic faction that slavery is indifferent and unworthy of federal protection, which is insufficient in the South, while the national mind has actually passed far beyond both of these principles, and is settled in the conviction that slavery, whereever and howsoever it exists, exists only to be regretted and deplored.

I counsel this course farther, because the necessity for a return to the old national way has become at last absolute and imperative. We can extend slavery into new territories, and create new slave states only by re-opening the African slave trade; a proceeding which, by destroying all the existing values of the slaves now held in the country, and their increase, would bring the north and the south into complete unanimity in favor of that return.

Finally I counsel that return because a Statesman has been designated who possesses, in an

eminent and most satisfactory degree, the virtues and the qualifications necessary for the leader in so great and generous a movement; and I feel well assured that ABRAHAM LINCOLN will not fail to re-inaugurate the ancient constitutional policy in the administration of the government successfully, because the Republican party, after ample experience, has at last acquired the courage and the constancy necessary to sustain him, and because I am satisfied that the people, at last fully convinced of the wisdom and necessity of the proposed reformation, are prepared to sustain and give it effect.

But when it shall have been accomplished, what may we expect then; what dangers must we incur; what disasters and calamities must we suffer? I answer no dangers, disasters or calamities. All parties will acquiesce, because it will be the act of the people, in the exercise of their sovereign power, in conformity with the constitution and laws, and in harmony with the eternal principles of justice, and the benignant spirit of the age in which we live. All parties and all sections will alike rejoice in the settlement of a controversy, which has agitated the country and disturbed its peace so long. We shall regain the respect and good will of the Nations, and once more, consistent with our principles, and with our ancient character, we shall, with their free consent, take our place at their head, in their advancing progress, towards a higher and more happy, because more humane and more genial civilization.